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ABSTRACT

An overview is given of the military action which took place in Georgia during the American Revolution, specifically the years 1776-1782. The pamphlet, one in a series about the American Revolution in Georgia, can be used for junior or senior high school students as supplementary reading or as a brief unit. A teacher's guide is included. Georgia was the southernmost colony to rebel against British rule. Many Georgians were torn between supporting the Crown and joining the Whig (rebel) cause. When war broke out, Georgia was in a critical position because her northern regions were firm Whig supporters but her southern borders provided a haven for Tories. Early in the war, the Whigs attempted to capture St. Augustine in British-held Florida, but failed. In 1778, the British moved against Georgia and captured Savannah and Augusta. Fighting took place in rural areas throughout the years 1778-1780, ending in Whig reoccupation of Augusta. Savannah was regained two years later, largely due to other Whig victories in northern colonies. When East Florida was ceded to Spain in 1783, Georgia was free of military threat from the southern colony. A brief teacher's guide presents behavioral objectives, activities, and a crossword puzzle based on material in the text. (Author/AV)

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# Military History 1776·1782

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SP 010 988

Editors' Note:

One of the early concerns of the Georgia Commission for the National Bicentennial Celebration was the lack of material on Revolutionary Georgia available for use in the state's public schools during the bicentennial years. As a result, one of the first projects of the Commission was the preparation of a series of pamphlets on the American Revolution in Georgia aimed specifically at public school use. With the cooperation of the Georgia Department of Education, this project has become a reality. Thirteen pamphlets are scheduled to be published between 1974 and 1978.

Our purpose in publishing these pamphlets is to present a clear, concise picture of Georgia's history during these important days. We hope that our efforts will encourage students' interest and add to their knowledge of Georgia's activities during the American Revolution.

Kenneth Coleman
Milton Ready

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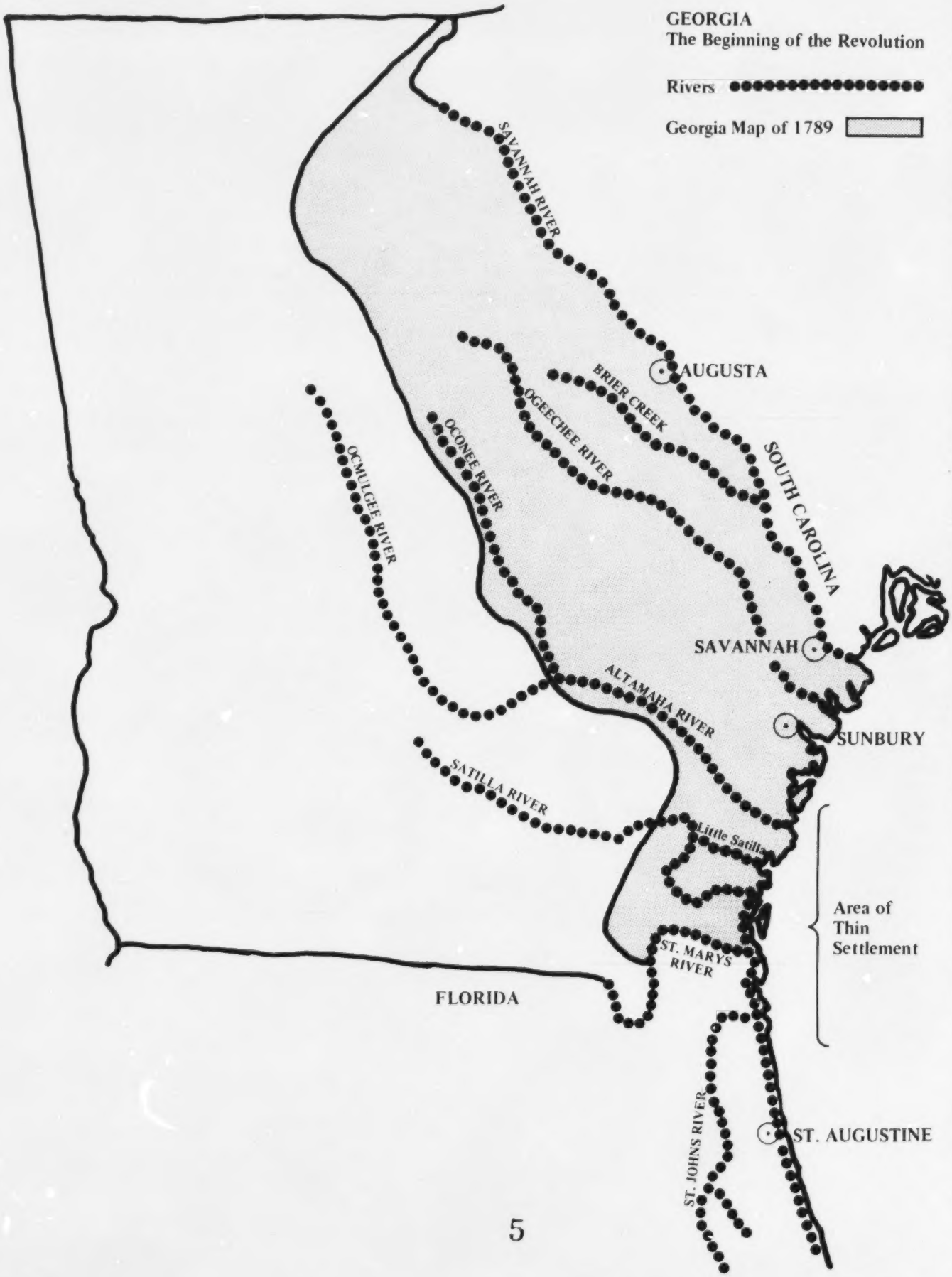
*Courtesy, Georgia Archives*

## Preface and Terminology

The following is a brief general view of the military action which took place in the colony of Georgia during the American Revolution. In this account there are mentioned several terms, expressions and names familiar to Georgians of the revolutionary period. These may seem unusual to the twentieth-century reader. Most of the places mentioned are familiar today as important in Georgia, but a few are not so well known. To aid the reader in placing these locations and in better understanding the terms used, there follows a list of names and terms and their meanings. Within the text there are several maps used to illustrate the action and its location.

| Term | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Continental Congress | Central government of the states which were fighting for their independence. |
| The Crown | George III was King of England during the Revolution but the term Crown as used here refers to royal English authority in a general sense. |
| Liberty Boys | Early supporters of independence who took action against British authority. |
| Loyalist | Supporter of the Crown, British sympathizer, also called Tory or Royalist. |
| Militia | Local military units within the colonies and states. |
| Patriot | Supporter of the American cause, also called Whig, Continental, Revolutionary. |
| Revolutionary | Same as Patriot. |
| Royalist | Same as Loyalist. |
| Tory | Same as Loyalist. |
| Whig | Same as Patriot. |


GEORGIA
The Beginning of the Revolution
Rivers
Georgia Map of 1789
SAVANNAH RIVER
AUGUSTA
BRIER CREEK
OGEECHEE RIVER
OCONEE RIVER
OCMULGEE RIVER
SOUTH CAROLINA
SAVANNAH
ALTAMAHA RIVER
SUNBURY
SATILLA RIVER
Little Satilla
Area of
Thin
Settlement
ST. MARYS
RIVER
FLORIDA
ST. JOHNS RIVER
ST. AUGUSTINE

**Part I**
**The Struggle for Georgia: Introduction**

During the war we call the American Revolution, Georgia was the southernmost of the colonies which rebelled against George III and English authority. Many Georgians were torn between continuing their support for the Crown and joining what was called the Whig cause. After some hesitation, however, many Georgians joined the colonists to the north and fought for their independence. The struggle in Georgia was carried out for more than six years. The story of that struggle may be considered in several easily studied and understood parts: the general conditions in Georgia at the outbreak of the war, the Whig offensive in which the revolutionaries tried to capture St. Augustine in British Florida, the British offensive in which the British captured Savannah and Augusta, the backcountry struggle and finally the recapture of Savannah and the end of the war of revolution.

Since its English settlement in 1733, Georgia had been a frontier outpost on the fringe of permanent English settlements. Until 1763 and the Treaty of Paris which gave Florida to the British, the land south of Georgia was always a potential battleground between England and Spain. These two countries were major opponents in Europe and America. In the War of Jenkins Ear, 1739-1742, Georgia, under the leadership of James Oglethorpe, successfully withstood a Spanish advance. The halt of that advance, the Battle of Bloody Marsh on St. Simons Island in July of 1742, marked the beginning of a long period of peace in Georgia. After Oglethorpe left Georgia in 1743, for more than ten years Georgia's defensive posts were practically ignored.

When royal authority came to Georgia under Governor John Reynolds in 1754, attention was given to the colony's military preparedness. Following the brief and unsuccessful term of Governor Reynolds, Georgia's second royal governor, Henry Ellis, made significant advances toward the rebuilding of colonial fortifications. When Ellis left Georgia in 1760, his successor, James Wright, found the colony's military preparedness the best it had been in some time. However, he felt that Georgia was endangered by the Indian and Spanish threats of the French and Indian War which touched on the northern and eastern borders of Georgia. The treaty ending that conflict in 1763 spared Wright and his colonists the very real threat of attack from the Spanish in Florida or the French in Louisiana. With English control of Florida established by the Treaty of Paris of 1763, Wright's administration was fortunately free from further immediate military concerns. It was not until 1775 that the possibility of military action arose again.

Governor Wright's successful first four years as governor began to be overshadowed by 1765 with the rise of revolutionary protest and increasing opposition from opponents of royal authority. Those issues which were inflaming the northern colonies—the Sugar Act (1764), the Stamp Act (1765) and the Townshend Duties (1767)—were slower to anger Georgians than their northern

*Courtesy, Georgia Archives, History of the United States, by Charles A. Goodrich, p. 162*

neighbors. Yet more and more Georgians joined the ranks of protesters against the British government. When, in early 1775, Governor Wright lost his control over the colonial assembly, the revolutionaries or Whigs began to secure political and military control. Governor Wright was now virtually a prisoner. Whig militia units formed, supplies were gathered, and communications were established with the Philadelphia meeting of the Second Continental Congress. In April, with the fighting at Lexington and Concord, the likelihood of military action in Georgia appeared certain.

Georgia was in a critical position as war broke out. While on the northern boundary South Carolina was firmly committed to the Whig cause, Florida to the south provided a haven for Tories. At St. Augustine the Governor of East Florida, Patrick Tonyn, and the military commander encouraged and protected raids into southern Georgia for food, especially cattle. John Stuart, British Indian superintendent located at St. Augustine, tried to prevent Whig use of Indians in their fight with the Crown.

With the fighting underway in the North neither the British nor the Continental commanders could afford to devote a great deal of attention to the South. The Whigs in Georgia felt their position was as vital as Boston Harbor or Fort Ticonderoga, but as the hostilities began, the battle for Georgia fell largely on the shoulders of Georgians and their southern neighbors.

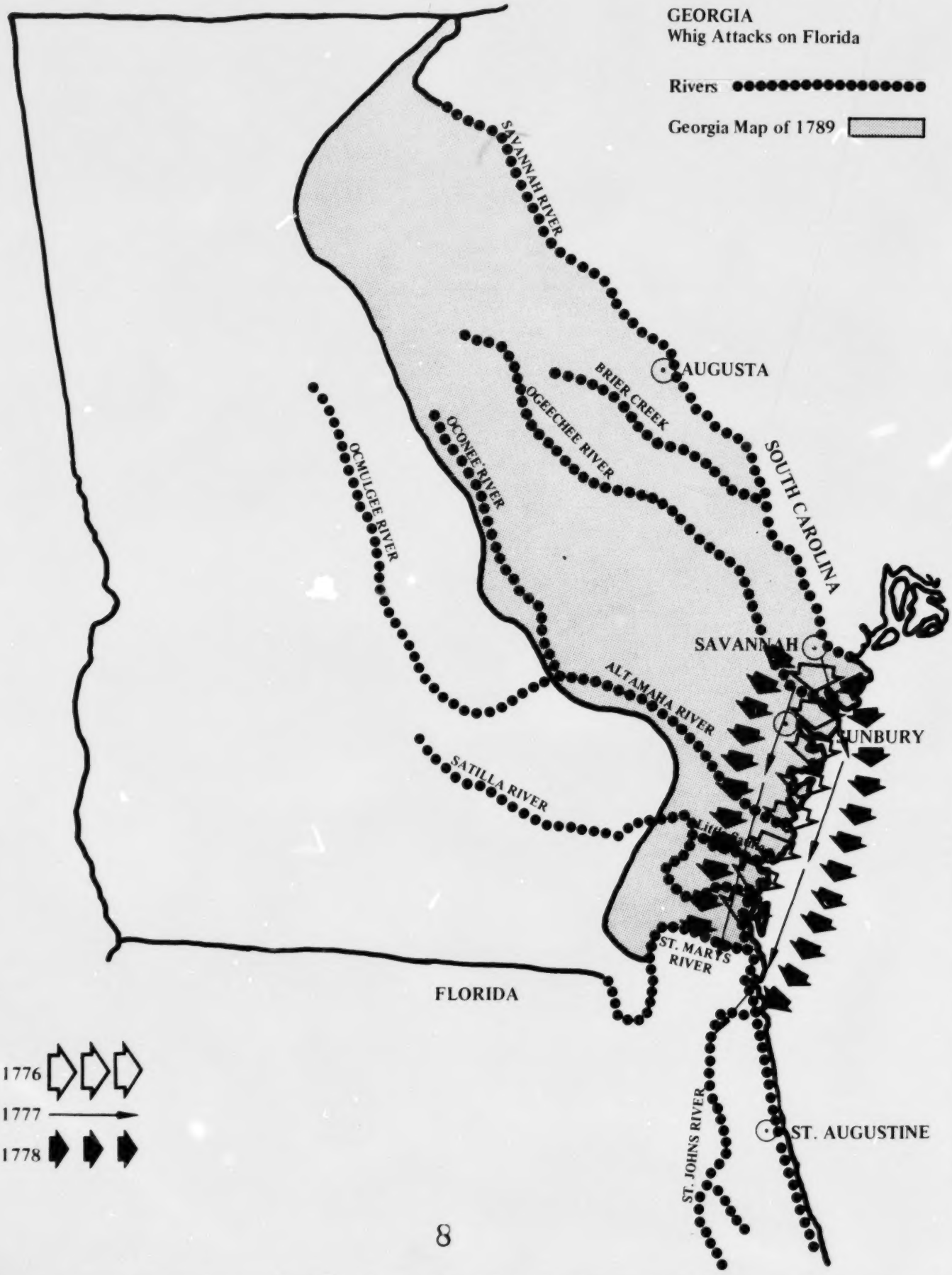
**Part II**
**The Whig Offensive, 1776-1778**

With the beginning of war at Lexington and Concord, Georgia's Whig element hastened plans for the colony's defensive and offensive action against the British. Accorded respect for his past popularity, Governor Wright was ignored in his advice to the Whig leaders. When word reached him that a British naval force was hoping to buy provisions at Savannah in January, 1776, Wright appealed to the Whig leaders to allow the purchase of some rice. He hoped to avoid a physical confrontation with his majesty's forces. The Whigs not only chose to ignore Wright but placed him under house arrest, preparing to resist all efforts by the British to do business in Georgia.

In February, 1776, the expected British vessels arrived at Savannah hoping to purchase provisions. The British were anxious to secure the rice on several vessels in the river north of the city. The fact that the Whigs had agreed not to sell goods to the British made the purchase impossible. The result was Georgia's first battle of the Revolution. The Council of Safety, the Whig executive group, determined to prevent any capture of the rice. On the night of March 2, British troops landed on Hutchinson's Island, in the river opposite Savannah, and got on board the rice vessels. On March 3, the men sent by the Council of Safety to prevent the taking of the vessels were surprised and captured by the British. The Whigs arrested all royal officials in the city when they learned of the capture of their friends. Cannon fire from shore fell short of the vessels and efforts to burn the rice were only partially successful. Fourteen or 15 vessels with between 1,000 and 2,000 barrels of rice were taken by the British. The prisoners on both sides were released and the British left with the provisions. With this rather awkward beginning, Georgia was at war with the Crown.

For the first years of the American Revolution, Georgia was out of major theaters of action. While the war raged to the north in Trenton and Princeton, Valley Forge and Saratoga, Georgians decided that East Florida should be captured. While Georgians hoped and asked for Continental and Carolina militia support, they would, if necessary, depend on their own devices to capture the Tories and British military in Florida.

There was a small British garrison at St. Augustine, and Florida was providing a haven for the


GEORGIA
Whig Attacks on Florida
Rivers
Georgia Map of 1789
SAVANNAH RIVER
AUGUSTA
BRIER CREEK
OGEECHEE RIVER
OCONEE RIVER
OCMULGEE RIVER
SOUTH CAROLINA
SAVANNAH
ALTAMAHA RIVER
SATILLA RIVER
ST. MARYS RIVER
FLORIDA
1776
1777
1778
ST. JOHNS RIVER
ST. AUGUSTINE

Tories who were fleeing Georgia and the Carolinas. The increasing Florida population put a strain on food supplies in that British colony. Southern Georgia seemed the logical source of food. By early 1776, hostile Indians, British irregulars, Tories and runaway slaves, organized as Florida Rangers, began to harass southern Georgia, taking cattle when possible to help feed St. Augustine. Florida presented yet another problem. John Stuart, British Indian superintendent, worked to keep the Indians neutral, but Georgians saw his presence at St. Augustine as a threat to their use of Indians against the British. These factors added up to Georgia's several attempts to invade Florida and capture St. Augustine.

In the summer of 1776, representatives from Georgia met in Charleston with General Charles Lee, commander of the Continental troops in the Southern Department, and secured the promise of financial support and command planning in Georgia.

The Continental Congress in early 1776 recommended that Georgia along with North and South Carolina undertake a joint expedition at Continental expense to capture St. Augustine. Before this effort could be carried out, however, border incidents in the area of the St. Marys River began. The Florida Rangers raided southern Georgia. In May the Georgia Council of Safety ordered Captain William McIntosh and his troop of horsemen to attack the British forts in the St. Marys region and drive south all Florida troops in that area.

By August General Lee had settled on the idea of breaking up the British settlements and plantations between the St. Marys and St. Johns rivers. He believed that his troop strength was not enough to capture St. Augustine. That same month Colonel Lachlan McIntosh, Georgia's Continental Commander, raided in northern Florida and forced the British south of the St. Marys. Lee asked Georgia leaders if that were not sufficient. But Georgia's sights were still on St. Augustine, and the Council started collecting supplies for an attack. The expedition took place in September, and some American troops did get to the St. Johns, but most got no further than Sunbury. None ever made it to St. Augustine. Sickness of the troops, insufficient transportation, hot weather, hostilities of the Cherokees against Georgia's upcountry and lack of cooperation between Lee and civilian state authorities are considered reasons for the failure of this 1776 effort.

The year 1777 brought new leaders and renewed martial aspirations to Georgia. With the death of Archibald Bulloch, Georgia's President and commander-in-chief, Button Gwinnett became the state's President and military leader. Gwinnett hoped that the new Continental commander in the South, General Robert Howe, could be more helpful to Georgia efforts against Florida. Gwinnett and his council were sure that with proper help from Howe St. Augustine could be captured. Howe, however, refused to send troops except for a single battalion which he sent to Sunbury. Gwinnett thought Howe did not like the idea of working with civilians. State planning went on despite the lack of Continental support.

The chances for success against the British were further reduced by the fact that Gwinnett and Lachlan McIntosh failed to cooperate. The two men fell into dispute when George McIntosh, brother of Lachlan, was arrested and accused of aiding the British. By the time there was any cooperation the British at St. Augustine knew of Georgia's plans. In April when the troops set out, the dispute between the President and the military leader flared up again. On the advice of the Council of Safety, both Gwinnett and McIntosh returned to Savannah leaving Colonel Samuel Elbert to command. Elbert and the Continental troops proceeded by boat via the inland passage, and a group of mounted militia went overland. When the two forces failed to meet on the St. Johns River as planned, Elbert decided to abandon the effort and return to Savannah where the force

arrived in the middle of June.

By 1778, Georgians had come to expect an annual assault on St. Augustine and plans were made for just that. The raids of the Florida Rangers were now as near Savannah as the Altamaha River and spies were reported in the city itself. In view of these developments and the unsuccessful assaults on the south, the Whig government authorized "roving commissions," or anyone who could raise as many as fifteen men, to plunder Florida. Under these conditions John Houston, now Governor, prepared to lead the third effort against the British in Florida. Again there was to be a combined force, naval and land, Georgia and Continental. This time the troops reached the St. Marys River, but jealousy among the commanders and lack of proper leadership continued to plague the attackers. The effort bogged down in the heat of the swamps of southern Georgia, moving briefly into Florida but never to St. Augustine. A force numbering 2,000 and consisting of Georgia and Carolina Continentals under General Howe, Georgia militia under Governor Houston, South Carolina militia under Colonel Andrew Williamson and naval units under Commodore Oliver Bowen failed in the face of the old problem of divided command. The abundance of commanders confused the effort to the point that by July, Howe and the Continentals left the expedition at the St. Marys and returned north. Without this support other leaders refused to follow the Governor further and the expedition ended.

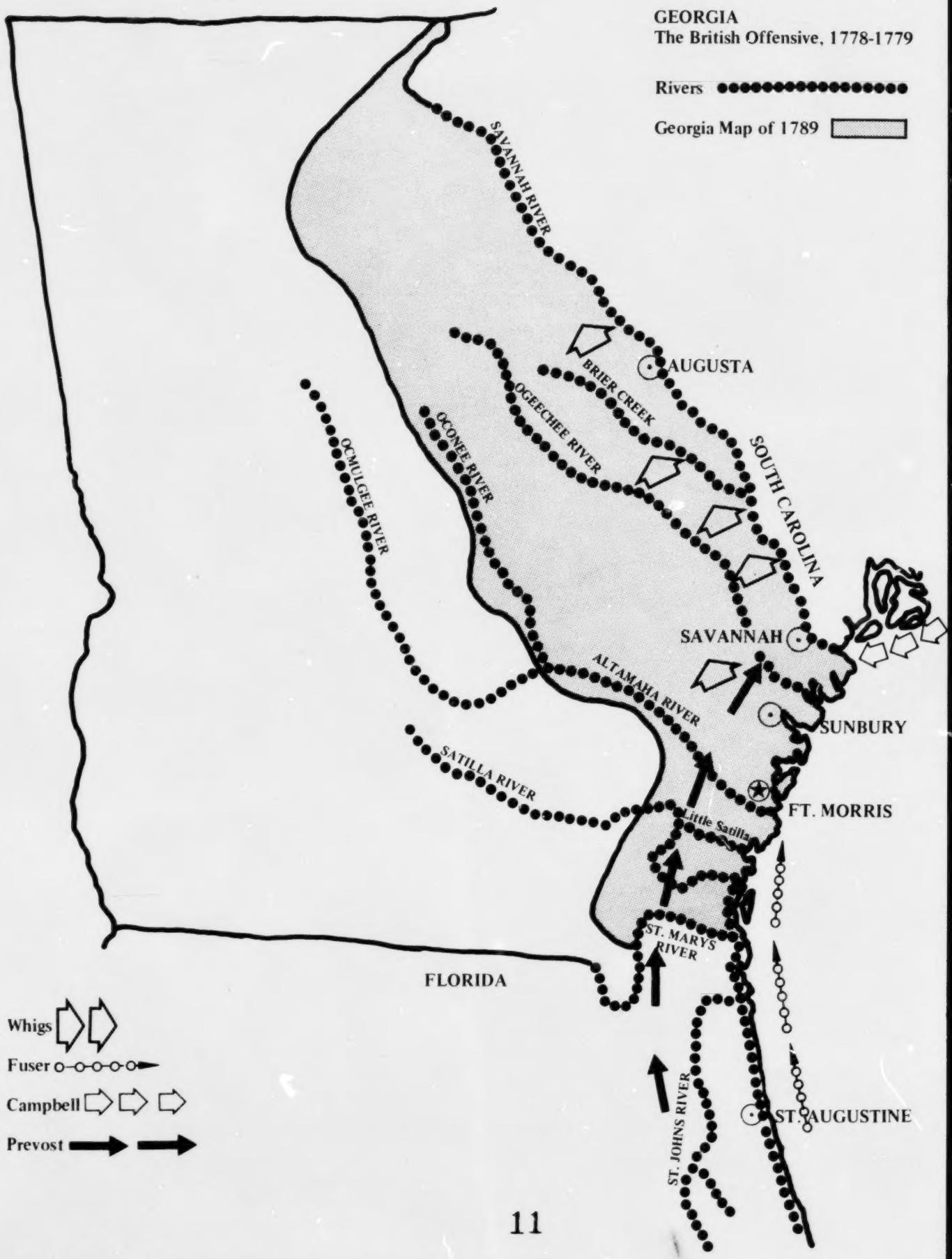
**Part III**
**The British Offensive**

In the middle of November of 1778, news reached Georgia that British war plans called for an invasion in the south. Given the choice of attacking Georgia or South Carolina, the British decided to hit Georgia first, moving on toward Charleston. The British believed that once Savannah and Charleston were restored to royal authority and the old forms of government were reestablished, there would be a rush back to the Tory side by Americans. On the strength of this belief and because of Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga in 1777, the theater of operations in the south became much more active in late 1778.

The attack on Georgia was to consist of forces from Florida capturing the southern coastal area and then joining a seaborne expedition from New York at Savannah. British forces under Lieutenant Colonel L. V. Fuser marched overland into Georgia in mid-November. Fuser's forces, upon reaching Sunbury, confronted Lieutenant Colonel John McIntosh, commander of Georgia forces at Fort Morris, who, when ordered by Fuser to surrender, replied, "COME AND TAKE IT." Fuser, discovering that expected British reinforcements under Lieutenant Colonel James Mark Prevost had not arrived, declined McIntosh's invitation and returned to Florida. Prevost reached Midway, only a few miles from Sunbury, where he destroyed the meeting house before returning to St. Augustine. Thus, the anticipated cooperation of these two expeditions had not materialized, and none of Georgia was in British hands as a result.

After several false starts caused by bad sailing weather, the force from New York reached Savannah in December. It consisted of 2,000 to 4,000 men under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell. The troops included portions of the 71st Scottish Regiment, New York loyalists, Hessians and a detachment of royal artillery.

The city of Savannah lay before the British ill defended. General Robert Howe of the Continental army, with a force of less than 1,000 was in charge of defenses as the British arrived. Howe's strength suffered not only from a lack of sufficient men but also from a lack of cooperation from state civil leaders and the head of the Georgia militia, Colonel George Walton. Natural defenses of lowlands and swamps surrounded the city, but an unguarded


GEORGIA
The British Offensive, 1778-1779
Rivers
Georgia Map of 1789
SAVANNAH RIVER
AUGUSTA
BRIER CREEK
OGEECHEE RIVER
OCONEE RIVER
OCMULGEE RIVER
SOUTH CAROLINA
SAVANNAH
ALTAMAHA RIVER
SUNBURY
SATILLA RIVER
FT. MORRIS
Little Satilla
ST. MARYS RIVER
FLORIDA
ST. JOHNS RIVER
ST. AUGUSTINE
Whigs
Fuser
Campbell
Prevost

*Courtesy, Georgia Archives, History of the United States, by Charles A. Goodrich, p. 168*

passage through the marshes made it possible for a Negro to guide the British forces into the city without meeting resistance. Taken by surprise, the Whig forces scattered, losing more than half their number to death or capture. The British lost only about 25 wounded or killed. General Howe escaped to South Carolina with some of his troops, leaving Georgia defended by an irregular force which fled north toward Augusta. Campbell swept up the river from Savannah toward Augusta. The December 29 capture of Savannah was followed on January 2 by the capture of Ebenezer, the old Salzburger settlement. By the end of the month the British were in control at Augusta, driving the patriots into the backcountry.

Most of Georgia had passed under British control in less than a month's time. With the great success of the British military, efforts were made to follow with the reestablishment of royal civil authority. Sir James Wright, Georgia's royal governor, would arrive in Savannah in 1779 and resume his old post. While he was to hold the position of Governor for almost three years, he was never really able to reassert the authority he had maintained prior to the Revolution, and his only real power required military support.

General Howe was replaced by General Benjamin Lincoln. He gathered a force of 5,000 men in South Carolina, but the recapture of Georgia was beyond his immediate grasp. The war in Georgia became a struggle for the backcountry.

**Part IV**
**The Backcountry Struggle, 1779-1782**

After taking Savannah and Augusta, the British under Campbell penetrated the backcountry in an effort to completely crush Whig resistance. At first it appeared that the Whigs would be completely driven from Georgia, but there was a determined resistance under the leadership of such men as Elijah Clarke, John Twiggs and John Dooly. These men led the Whigs on the frontier and received support from Colonel Andrew Pickens of South Carolina. The powerful resistance in the area pressed the British out of Augusta and, on February 14, 1779, defeated a British force of about 700 men at the Battle of Kettle Creek in Wilkes County. The militia force under Colonels Andrew Pickens, John Dooly and Elijah Clarke surprised the Tories under Colonel Boyd. Boyd's death in the battle and the defeat of his force ended a proposed British pursuit of Whigs into upper Georgia.

At this point Campbell moved out of Augusta and back to Savannah. New life seemed to spring into the revolutionary cause with the British retreat. The victory at Kettle Creek was, however, followed in early March, 1779, by a British victory in the backcountry. General John Ashe, commander of North Carolina state troops, had crossed the Savannah River and taken a position on Briar Creek. On March 3, Ashe was surprised by a British and Tory force under Lieutenant Colonel Mark Prevost. The defeat of the Whig forces at Briar Creek was a grim reminder that the backcountry could not be considered the exclusive territory of the Whigs.

The Georgia front was relatively quiet during the summer of 1779, but in the fall the Whigs initiated an assault on Savannah, hoping to return the city to the American side. With the entry of France into the war on the side of the Americans, there was important naval support available. Charles-Henri, Comte d'Estaing, Vice Admiral of the French navy, had come to American waters and had been operating in the West Indies.

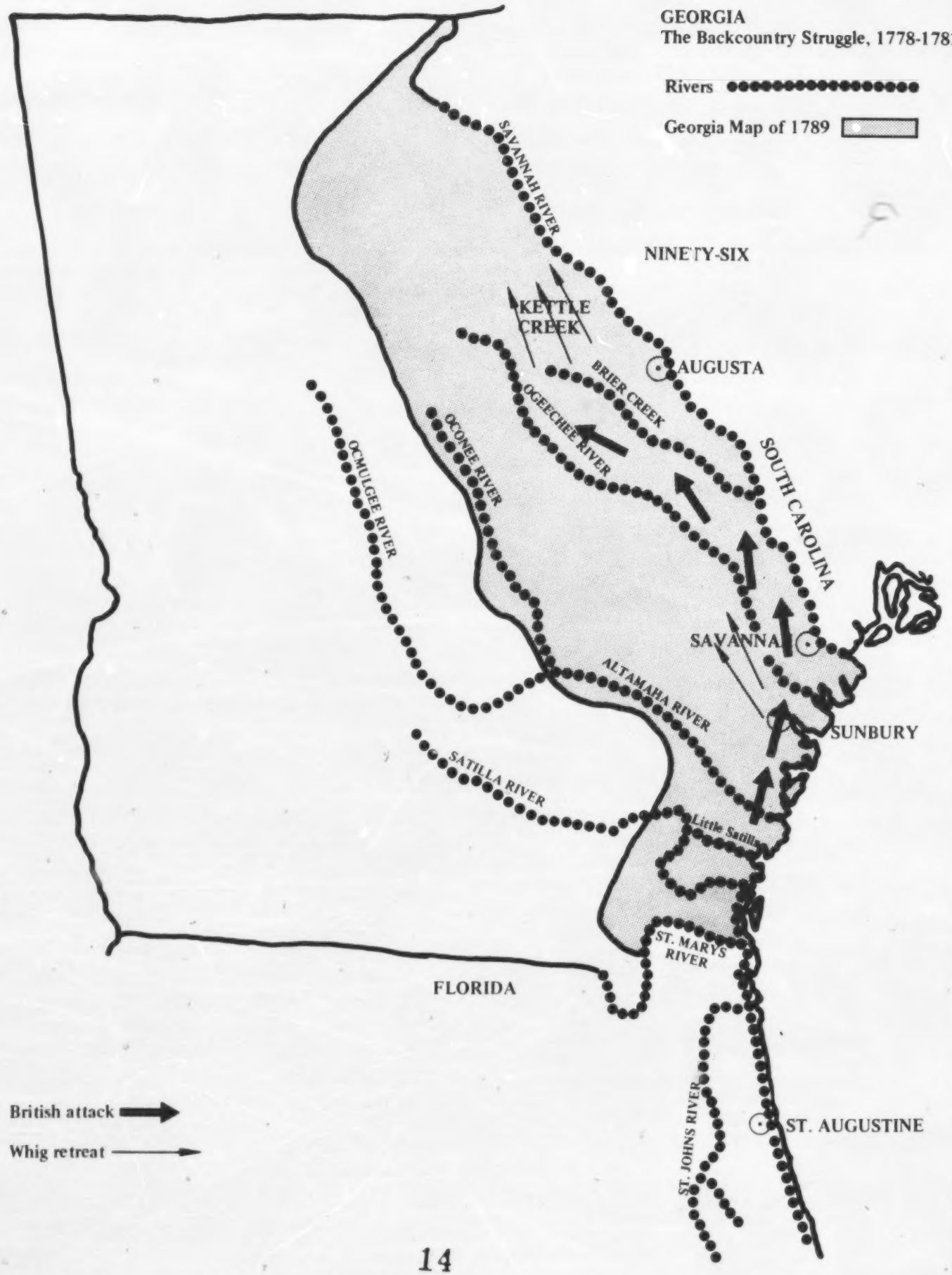
Governor John Rutledge of South Carolina asked for d'Estaing's aid in the recapture of Georgia from the British. Early in September of 1779, the French officer appeared unannounced off Savannah with a fleet and about 4,000 troops. General Lincoln collected Continental troops and militia in Georgia and South Carolina. D'Estaing demanded the surrender of Savannah whereupon General Augustine Prevost, military commander of British forces in the city, begged for time to consider. The time granted by d'Estaing was sufficient to allow for British reinforcements to arrive under Colonel John Maitland and bolster the city's defenses. Lincoln appeared about the same time as Maitland and the French and Americans attacked October 9. The attack failed with an allied loss of more than 800 casualties. A little more than a week later the siege was abandoned and d'Estaing departed for France. The attack of October 9 was a gallant effort which cost the life of Polish Count Casimir Pulaski, fighting for American liberty. The British lost fewer than 200 men. General Lincoln returned to South Carolina in an unsuccessful effort to shore up the defenses of that revolutionary stronghold.

Once more Georgia had suffered from a lack of cooperation between commanders who were attempting to overcome the British. D'Estaing believed himself to be superior in military matters to his American allies and as a result tended to go it alone. His delay in storming the city and the lack of cooperation between the French and Americans allowed Colonel Maitland to enter Savannah. The surprise arrival of d'Estaing did not give the Americans time to prepare proper support for his efforts, and the subsequent failures to plan together made the rescue of Savannah impossible.

With the capture of Charleston and Lincoln's entire army on May 12, 1780, the Whig cause in the South reached its lowest ebb. Augusta was soon in British hands. British power was strongest around Savannah, but there were in Georgia two areas of significant resistance to royal control. Whigs around Midway demonstrated continued opposition to British authority, and Georgia's greatest Whig strength remained in the backcountry. With a state government too weak to aid to the military, the organization and support of Georgia's backcountry fighting men was mostly up to local commanders. Occasionally the irregular state government aided in forming local units of militia and state troops. These units were used in cooperation with Continentals. Groups of militia did frontier guard duty and joined with Continentals against the British. The chief problem for these fighting men was the lack of supply and pay.

A major source of Whig military support came from the militiamen who remained in the field for months. While individuals among this group demonstrated great valor, the regular Continental forces could never be sure of the size and dependability of such forces. In the backcountry there was another potential source of aid for the Whigs, the Indians. Although there were efforts throughout the war to enlist the support of the Indians on the Whig side, the results were disappointing. The Whigs had little to offer the Indians in the way of pay. The British experience in dealing with the Indians plus their ability to supply Indian presents served the Tory side well in the competition for Indian support.

After the British reoccupation of Augusta in May, 1780, Tory Colonel Thomas Brown was given command of the city. He took a heavy toll of vengeance against the Whigs who had early in the war tarred and feathered him for his loyalty to the Crown. Brown launched an extensive


GEORGIA
The Backcountry Struggle, 1778-1782
Rivers
Georgia Map of 1789
SAVANNAH RIVER
NINETY-SIX
KETTLE CREEK
AUGUSTA
BRIER CREEK
OGEECHEE RIVER
OCONEE RIVER
OCMULGEE RIVER
SOUTH CAROLINA
SAVANNA
ALTAMAHA RIVER
SUNBURY
SATILLA RIVER
Little Satilla
ST. MARYS RIVER
FLORIDA
ST. JOHNS RIVER
ST. AUGUSTINE
British attack
Whig retreat

*Courtesy, Georgia Archives, Historical Collections of Georgia, by George White, p. 441*

campaign to rid the country around Augusta of Whigs. So successful were his efforts that many fled into the mountains of eastern Tennessee for safety. Among those who did not escape was Colonel John Dooly who in the summer was murdered by Tories. Tradition has it that the murderers of Dooly suffered the wrath of Georgia's legendary "War Woman," Nancy Hart.

According to tradition, soon after killing Dooly, five of the Tories came upon the cabin of Nancy Hart, in the wilds of Wilkes County, and demanded food. While the Tory guests enlivened themselves with whiskey, Nancy sent out word of the Tory visitors by her daughter to the nearby Whigs. Taking advantage of their inattention, Nancy slipped their guns out of a crack in the cabin. By the time they discovered her action, the Tories found themselves facing the barrel of a gun held by their hostess. Two of the men died by her hand before the Whigs arrived to capture the remaining three and hang them.

In the late months of 1780, the Whigs regrouped sufficiently to attempt to take Augusta from the British. A September attack failed resulting, according to tradition, in the execution by Thomas Brown of several prisoners by hanging them from the stairway of the Mackay House.

**Part V**
**Savannah Regained, 1781-1782**

With the Whig threat in the upcountry and the irritations to the south of Savannah, Governor James Wright was insecure in his position. He felt that to ignore the frontier was to submit to Whig recapture of Augusta and eventually to their recapture of the city of Savannah. Wright had depended on the strength of the British forces in the Carolinas and Georgia under Lord Cornwallis during 1780, but that commander felt Georgia to be of little importance in the overall British strategy in the South. Wright feared that the removal of Cornwallis' forces into North Carolina would insure the revival of Whig threats in Georgia and South Carolina. British troops in Georgia, who had moved into the Carolinas with the capture of Charleston in 1780, never returned to Georgia. Cornwallis, despite Wright's protests, moved into North Carolina in the fall of 1780.

By the spring of 1781, Wright's fears were realized as General Nathanael Greene, latest commander of the Continental Army's Southern Department, began plans to take the offensive in Georgia and the Carolinas. As a part of this effort Augusta, in June, 1781, fell to a mixed force of Georgia and South Carolina militia commanded by Colonels Elijah Clarke and Micajah Williamson aided by Continental troops under General Andrew Pickens and Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee. Throughout May and June British posts in upcountry Georgia and South Carolina surrendered to the Whigs. The fight in the backcountry was not over, but it was clear that the revival of Whig spirits and the significant support of Greene's efforts were turning the tide of that region and that recapture of Savannah was in the plans of the patriots.

As the Whigs pressed toward Augusta and Savannah from their frontier retreats, more and more Tories, fleeing the advance, sought safety in Savannah and the immediate area, adding greatly to Wright's burden there. While the Governor did attempt to make use of these royal supporters in militia units, he was still in serious need of regular troop support in view of what appeared to be an inevitable attack by the Whigs. Apparently the high command realized Wright's plight but could do little to help him, and by the end of 1781, the British commander at Charleston was willing to authorize British withdrawal from Georgia if the local Commander there felt the situation was indefensible.

The fate of Savannah as well as that of the British position in America hinged on the defeat of Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia, in October, 1781. With that American victory new attention was given to the Continental position in the deep South. While Greene as southern commander had secured the backcountry in the Carolinas and in Georgia, he could hope to recapture the major cities of Charleston and Savannah only with proper reinforcements. Some reinforcements came in January 1782, when Brigadier General Anthony Wayne's troops were sent to Georgia to help reestablish American authority. With the news of this troop movement the British at Charleston sent 200 troops to Savannah, bringing the force there to 1,000 to face Wayne's 500.

If Wayne was lacking in troop strength, he was not in courage and determination. With a force half the size of that of the Savannah defenders, Wayne attacked, pushing to within a few miles of the city by February of 1782. Sensing, no doubt, the impending victory, the Georgia Whig militia joined Wayne's forces in increasing numbers. To counterbalance this, however, South Carolina state troops who came with Wayne soon left, their enlistments expired, a problem that had plagued Continental forces all during the conflict. Knowing the uncertainty of Wayne's troop strength, the British commander in South Carolina felt no immediate threat to Savannah; but he failed to reckon with the Continental general's determination and the surge of patriotism in Georgia.

In late February Georgia Whig leaders appealed to the Hessians, professional German soldiers in British service, to desert. Their long duty in the area together with the influence on them from Whigs in the German community of Ebenezer helped make the effort a success. The German desertion hastened similar actions by other fair-weather loyalists and soon Wayne's camp was overrun with loyalists volunteering for duty against the Crown. Through the spring of 1782, the Whigs did little but pin the British down in Savannah. The inevitability of the situation prompted British military commanders to propose to General Greene an end to hostilities. The offer was refused.

April, 1782, saw an important change in the situation in Georgia. A new British commander for North America, Sir Guy Carleton, decided to withdraw British troops from Savannah. Governor Wright protested that with only a small reinforcement the colony could be retained. His appeals fell on deaf ears, and the withdrawal from Savannah began.

In the second week of July, 1782, the last of the British troops was out of the city and the Whigs were taking position under Lieutenant Colonel James Jackson of the Georgia troops. Scattered Tory elements remained until the end of the month before their removal to St. Augustine, but the Whig forces then repatriated the city. The Whig state government was back in operation in Savannah two days after the British left. Fighting had now ended in Georgia.

In April, 1783, the Continental Congress decreed the suspension of hostilities and the demobilization of the army. While the British remained in East Florida, there was a fear that contacts between former Georgia loyalists and British sympathizers there might result in invasion. These fears were never realized, however, and the cession of East Florida to Spain in 1783-85 ended that particular military concern for the state. The fighting for independence in Georgia had ended.

## Part VI
## Comments on Sources

The study of the American Revolution in Georgia may be continued in several ways. Research into a particular event may lead the student into original materials in the form of manuscripts or the printed editions of certain official records which are generally available in school and public libraries. Good histories of Georgia during the Revolutionary period are fortunately available in several forms, and there are more to come as part of the publication program of the state's Bicentennial Commission. Beyond the printed page or written manuscript there are several interesting possibilities for students who want to "get back into the past." The comments which follow should serve as a sample of the materials available in the above mentioned forms. Hopefully they will lead students along the path of history and to a fuller understanding of the events and meanings of the American Revolution in Georgia.

The military history of the Revolution in Georgia is closely tied to, and involved in, the political history of that period. Georgians are fortunate that our colonial records are available in a printed, edited form. *The Colonial Records of the State of Georgia* in 26 volumes was printed in Atlanta in the early years of the twentieth century and has recently been reprinted. Volumes 27-39, long unpublished, were available only in manuscript form but now as a part of the Bicentennial Program effort they will be published. *The Revolutionary Records of the State of Georgia*, published in 1908 in three volumes, is of course a basic primary source.

*The Georgia Historical Quarterly*, the publication of the Georgia Historical Society, has offered from time to time printed versions of some of the important documents of the revolutionary era such as "The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774, through November 7, 1775, and September 6, 1779, through September 20, 1780," in volumes XXXIV and XXXV (1950-1951). Manuscript records from

the period of the rebellion are available in several locations in the state. Some of the most important documents are to be found in the State Archives in Atlanta, and in Athens the University's special collections include several important personal collections from that period. Hodgson Hall, home of the Georgia Historical Society, in Savannah, also houses important materials on the period. Outside the state the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress in Washington contains valuable information about Revolutionary Georgia as does the National Archives and several other university collections, notably Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Histories of Georgia which focus on the Revolution were being written within a few years of the end of the event, but some of the most valuable and fortunately most readily available works have been written within the past half century. Probably the best starting place for a study of the Revolution is Kenneth Coleman's *The American Revolution in Georgia*. Coleman's study begins with the colonial situation in 1763 and carries the story beyond the end of the Revolution and into the period of the adoption of the Federal Constitution in 1789. The book follows the rise of discontent in the colony, military, political, social and economic events into the Revolution and through its conclusion and offers interpretations as well as factual details about the entire period. Coleman's bibliography provides a readily available detailed list of sources for further consideration.

A few military events in the Revolution in Georgia have received special attention. One such event was the attempt to recapture Savannah from the British in 1779. Alexander A. Lawrence's *Storm Over Savannah* is a well documented account of that unsuccessful attempt. Other specific episodes have been covered in articles in the *Georgia Historical Quarterly*.

Once the written stories have been read, many students may find it interesting and informative to look for themselves at the location of Georgia's Revolutionary struggle. Savannah is, of course, a fine place to start and within the past few years the city has done much to recapture the charm of the colonial period. Markers and monuments pertaining to the Revolutionary period abound and in the older parts of town the visitor can easily be transported back into the period of Savannah's famous seige. South of Savannah old Sunbury and Midway are centers around which war-time struggles took place. Midway Church and Fort Morris are sites of interest. The region around Augusta and into the backcountry provides several sites of importance to the story of Georgia in the Revolution. In Augusta the Mackay House is one of the proudest possessions of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The legend of Thomas Brown's execution of Whigs says that from the back stair of this house the Tory hanged several of the Georgia patriots.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources, together with other state agencies, the Georgia Historical Society and the fine libraries of the University of Georgia and Emory University provide information and glimpses of the past from which Georgians may build a better understanding of the events that took place in those years between 1775 and 1783. Georgians are fortunate in the wealth of their historical resources and the private and public agencies which promote the study of the resources.

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# Teacher's Guide

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The purpose of this Teacher's Guide is to help you make better use of the pamphlet, *Revolutionary Georgia: The Military History, 1776-1782.* Behavioral objectives, topics, teaching strategies, activities, questions and resources will be described. However, only you the teacher can make the teaching effective. The suggestions in this Teacher's Guide are not meant to describe the only way to teach about Revolutionary Georgia. You should create replacement or supplemental activities for your particular students.

**Behavioral Objectives**

1. Each student will match the terms described at the beginning of the pamphlet with their meanings.

2. Each student will be able to describe major military events after participating in making and studying a timeline of events.

3. Each student will demonstrate an understanding of the various political positions by writing a short essay describing whether he would have chosen to be a Loyalist, Whig or have remained neutral if he or she had lived in America during the Revolution.

4. Each student, using the pamphlet, will list at least six reasons why Whig attempts to invade Florida failed.

5. Each student will describe (either in writing or orally) the three powerful forces among the Whigs which fragmented their leadership.

6. Each student will do one activity of his or her choice listed under the section on depth opportunities.

You may want to supplement these with skill or affective objectives of your own in order to meet the needs of your students.

**Suggested Topics**

Rather than teaching about Revolutionary Georgia in the typical, chronological fashion, this Teacher's Guide will be designed to use the pamphlet like a resource book rather than as a novel. Activities will be described. In order to perform these activities, students will have to use *Revolutionary Georgia: The Military History;* however, it is not necessary (or even desirable) for them to read the pamphlet straight through from page one to the end.

**Suggested Activities**

1. It is necessary for the students to have some feeling for the "big picture." If your class has not studied the American Revolution as a whole, you should provide some background so they have an overview in which to place the military history of our state during the era of the Revolution. One excellent resource is the *American Heritage Book of the Revolution.*

You may want to use a Kodak Instamatic camera, flashcubes and slide film to take pictures of some of the illustrations in this book. The resulting slides could then be used to accompany a brief lecture. An

alternative to the slides would be to use the opaque projector; however, this would interrupt the flow of your presentation. Another alternative would be to show a filmstrip which covers events leading to the Revolution and the war itself (A list of filmstrips is included in the bibliography.).

2. In the above presentation you should be sure to introduce the terms described by Dr. Gurr at the beginning of the pamphlet. In addition, you can make and distribute copies of the following puzzle to aid students in learning the terms. Or, this puzzle can be used as a test to evaluate the students' understanding of the terms.*

3. You can point out to the students that Dr. Gurr refers to the "President" of Georgia and ask them how Georgia could have a President.

4. Place students in groups of 3 to 4. Have each group make a timeline for the years 1776-1783. The timeline should show the major military events in Georgia during the Revolution.

5. Ask students to pretend they are citizens of Georgia in 1776. They must make a decision about their commitment in the American rebellion.

   They could choose to be a Loyalist and supporter of the King.

   They could choose to be a "patriot" and take up arms against the forces of the Crown.

   They could choose not to choose. Many colonists (perhaps as many as 1/3) did not take sides in the Revolution.

In order to pool their ideas, students should be placed in small groups. Their task is to list the advantages and disadvantages of each of the three choices. Then, independently, each student is to write a one-page essay discussing which choice he or she would personally make.

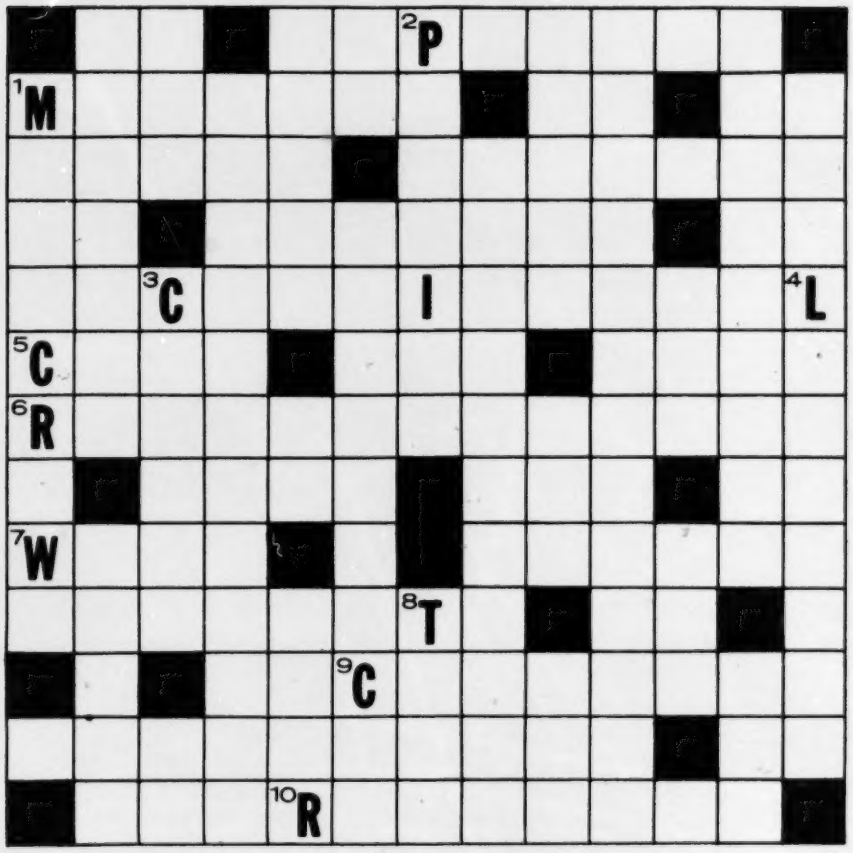
This can be followed by general class discussion of why students made the choices they did. Finally, you may want to ask some of the following questions.

(1) Why do you suppose some people chose the British side while others chose the American side? What makes people, in similar situations, make different choices?

(2) The following people made different decisions.

**Note to Teacher**

With the adoption of the Declaration of Independence British control technically ended. The United States came into existence with a weak central government in the Continental Congress. Central direction of the war effort and foreign affairs were under the control of the Congress, but cooperation with the central government in domestic affairs was a decision of individual states.*




**ACROSS**

1. Citizen Army (Militia)
3. First part of the name of the governing body, nickname of the colonials (Continental)
6. Anyone in favor of the Revolution (Revolutionary)
7. **Another** name for a colonist who supported the Revolution (Whig)
9. Second part of the name of the governing body, name of today's legislative branch (Congress)
10. Supporter of the Royalty (Royalist)

**DOWN**

2. Supporter of American independence; today, someone who loves his country (Patriot)
4. American-born supporter of the Crown (Loyalist)
5. Term referring to Royal English authority (Crown)
8. English-born person, living in America and a supporter of the Crown (Tory)

George Johnson was a merchant. Since there were very few finished products made in America, he relied on selling products he bought from England. George decided to be a Loyalist to save his business. Was this a good decision?

William Smith was a lawyer. He believed in liberty, independence and self-government. He chose to be a patriot. Was this a good decision?

Angus McDonald was a frontier farmer. The government didn't mean much to him. Whoever won the war would charge him taxes and spend the money on the cities. Angus didn't care who won; he wasn't going to fight for either side. Was this a good decision for Angus?

Why did these men make different choices?

6. In 1776, 1777 and 1778 Georgia Whigs attempted to invade Florida and capture its capital, St. Augustine. These attempts all failed. Students should be divided into small groups. Their task is to read the portions of the pamphlet which describe these attempted invasions and make a list of the reasons the invasions failed. Upon completion, each group can share its findings and a master list can be put on the board. Then the students should be asked: What conclusions can we draw about the organization of the Revolutionary forces in Georgia?

7. There were three groups attempting to control Whig military actions in Georgia.

   The continental army commanders such as Charles Lee, Robert Howe, Benjamin Lincoln, Nathanael Green and Anthony Wayne

   Georgia militia commanders such as William McIntosh, Lachlan McIntosh, Samuel Elbert and George Walton

   Civilian government leaders such as Button Gwinnett and John Houston

Ask students to skim through the pamphlet and list occasions when two or three of these groups failed to cooperate and what was the result of the lack of cooperation. This can be followed with a teacher-led discussion.

8. Give students an outline map of Georgia, including county divisions. Ask students to color in all counties named after men mentioned in the pamphlet.

9. Give students the following suggestions for depth opportunities.

   Create a recruiting poster to entice people to enlist for one of the opposing military groups.

   Take some revolutionary event (such as the capture of Savannah by the British) and draw two political cartoons, one from the Whig point of view and one from the Loyalist point of view.

   Make an oral or written report on any individual mentioned in the pamphlet.

Make a report on any county named after a Revolutionary figure.

Write a three-page report describing either the political, social or economic results of the American Revolution.

Research the weapons or life of the military men during the Revolution and make an oral report to the class. (If an oral report is done on weapons, it should be accompanied by illustrations.)

Make a large chart on poster board showing the periods of time (in months) that Georgia was controlled by the Whigs and by the British.

**Resources**

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Map of Revolutionary Georgia with a List of Military Activities

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The Black Man and the Revolution

Proclamation of Peace

Treaty of Peace

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G. Stephen Gurr, Georgia Southwestern College, Americus, Georgia

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Milton Ready, University of North Carolina, Asheville, North Carolina

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